

We're up today on fortune's hill  
And down from every sorrow.  
But in the wheel of good and ill  
All may be changed to-morrow.  
We're up and down as time flies on—  
Now easy, now hardest labor—  
No millionaire can safely frolic  
Upon his lowly neighbor.

Riches take wings—the man of wealth  
May meet with sudden losses,  
While he whose only store is health  
May ride behind his horses.  
Then do not slight the toiling poor,  
For labor's meek discomf.  
And though your fortune seems secure  
Some day you may change places.

God help us!—we're poor at best—  
Dependent on each other.  
Though crowned with ease or sore dis-  
tress.

Weak men are still man's brother.  
Then when our fortune's top we stand,  
Noit our state attending.  
Let us extend a helping hand  
To those about descending.

—Francis S. Smith, in *New York Weekly*.

## THE LAST HOUR

BY DAVID KIRK.

"Now, Miss Maynard, you're going to behold a wonder. Ashley Melincourt is to join us to-night, and you'll meet a man who has traveled all over the world without learning to drink or smoke, and has never gambled or made love in his life! You must hide your literary face under a bushel now, for he detests reviewers."

Time, three o'clock on a fine summer afternoon; place, the veranda of a quaint little hotel in one of the most picturesque old-fashioned of Breton towns; subject, the addition of a new member to the pleasant little American party already located there.

"Well, I'm glad the catalogue of Mr. Melincourt's perfections has one flaw in it," says the young lady, with a curl of her pretty lip which many of her admirers know to their cost. "Of course it is a dreadful sacrifice for any lady to meddle with literature; but I must be content to risk his displeasure, terrible as it may be. After all, it will be less insufferable than the stories of how many tigers he shot in India, and how many days he went without food in the desert, and the fever he had in China, and the dinner the Ameer gave him at Cabul. I suppose some critic has told him the truth on that score, and hence his emity to them."

"No; there's just the mystery—they've always spoken well of him hitherto; and as for talking of his travels, that's exactly what one can never get him to do. However, when six o'clock comes, you'll be able to judge for yourself."

Six o'clock came, and with it the expected guest—a short, square, bearded, sunburned man, with the grave, self-contained look of one accustomed to face, unaided, every form of difficulty and danger. He spoke little and seemed to follow the conversation with a quiet, attentive vigilance, incessantly provoking to Laura Maynard, because, as she afterwards said, it was "just like a school-teacher watching for somebody to make a mistake."

Dinner over, there was a general movement to the veranda, to watch the moon rise over the sea; and the influence of the hour gave a romantic and semi-mystical cast to the talk which at length turned to the transmigration of souls.

"It's a pity such a thing cannot be," said Melincourt. "Just think of the admirable changes we should behold! Our custom-house officers should haunt every harbor as sharks; our policemen prow in the darkness as wolves; our bankers suck their neighbors' blood in the form of leeches; our politicians chatter and grime in that of monkeys; and our critics transformed to frogs, croak amid congenial slime, against everything higher and better than themselves."

"You don't favor the critics, I see, Mr. Melincourt," said Laura, flushing with indignation.

"No; I look at them as they are—the hired hordes of literature, ready to take pay on either side, and to stab friend or foe as their master bids them; infallible because never owning a mistake; free from bias, since they never read the books which they review; showing their learning by misquoting; their refinement by billingsgate; and their modesty by setting themselves up as authorities upon subjects of which they know nothing."

The titter which followed this unconscious home-thrust kindled Laura Maynard's warm blood into a flame.

"Mr. Melincourt," cried she, wrathfully, "you are giving us an excellent illustration of the danger of setting up as an authority upon a subject of which you know nothing. I think I may claim to know more about critics than you, for I happen to be one myself!"

Melincourt answered only by a bow and an ironical smile, more galling than the bitterest sarcasm, as he arose from his place and sauntered away.

The three following days were so completely taken up with excursions into the surrounding country, that the quarrel had no chance of proceeding any farther; but on the fourth morning, the reaction consequent upon these energetic amusements began to show itself in a ranging of chairs along the veranda of the hotel, and a general production of Tauchnitz novels. Miss Maynard—who, sensitive, like all clever women, felt the mere presence of a person whom she disliked intolerably burdensome—gave the go-by to this impromptu reading-club, and set off on a solitary stroll along the sands which the retreating tide had left bare.

The choice was a good one, for, even in that picturesque region, it would have been hard to find a more charming walk. On one side lay the blue, sparkling sea; on the other, the long, dark outline of the frowning cliffs, dappled every here and there with tiny white cottages and green, waving woods. Between the two, smooth as a marble terrace, extended the vast level of hard, white sand. Far away to the right, cradled in a deep hollow between two mighty rocks, peeped forth the white-walled houses, the red-tiled roofs and quaintly carved church-tower of the little town; and over all the golden sunshine and the warm, dreamy, southern sky.

Little by little, as she left the inhabited region behind her, the grand repose of the landscape soothed the girl's ruffled feelings, while its beauty pleased her artistic eye. She felt once more, as she had done many a time already, that the strongest armor against the petty worries and vexations of life is to withdraw from them for a time into the great sanctuary of nature, in whose presence all earth's troubles look mean and trivial.

How long she stood there, drinking in

the splendor of that wonderful panorama, she could never have told; but suddenly she noticed, with a start, that the sand was growing wet and oozy under her feet. She turned, and was dismayed to find herself completely surrounded by water. The rising tide, pouring through the lower levels of the beach behind her, had actually cut her off from the shore!

Instantly a thousand tales of treacherous quicksands, of furious spring-tides, of children and even grown men swallowed up before the very eyes of their friends, came crowding upon her memory. And even while she looked, the sand beneath her feet vanished, and all was water, water, water, rising higher and higher every moment.

Suddenly, as she stood motionless, and paralyzed with terror, a tall figure appeared at her side, a strong hand grasped hers, and Ashley Melincourt's voice shouted in her ear: "Run, run!—there's not a moment to lose! Hold fast by me, and run for your life!"

It was a race for life, indeed. Fast as they fled, the horse race of the pursuing tide came closer and closer behind them. Could they but reach yonder projecting headland they would be safe; but how terribly distant it seemed! And, long before they reached it, the sea was upon them in earnest, almost dashing the girl from her feet. Melincourt snatched her up in his arms and plunged desperately on, breast deep amid the foaming waves. Deeper and deeper grew the water, stronger and stronger pressed the current. Twice he all but fell, where to fall was to rise no more; but at length, by a superhuman effort, the rock was gained, and, laying his charge gently upon a broad, flat ledge, he sank gasping beside her.

"How can I ever thank you, Mr. Melincourt!" faltered Laura, as she regained her breath.

"Time enough for that yet!" answered Ashley, with an affected gravity which was very far from feeling. "The first thing to be done is to get a safe place, for the tide will soon overtake us here."

Wet and exhausted as they both were, that upward struggle over the slippery rocks, thickly coated with sea-weed, was a long and perilous task; but the roar of the advancing tide from below spurred them on, and the top was reached at last. Then a wild cry burst from Laura's lips, when even her iron-nerved companion recoiled in dismay. They were standing upon an island!

There was no room for doubt; one glance made the whole truth terribly clear. Their sheltering crag was but an isolated fragment of the main cliff, divided from it by a hideous chasm nearly thirty feet in width, through which the waves were already leaping high and fiercely. They had escaped sudden destruction only to feel the lingering agony of being devoured inch by inch; for a moment's inspection showed them that every flood-tide covered the rock to the very summit.

"It seems hard to die so soon!" murmured the girl, piteously.

"Hard for you," said her companion, simply. "No one will care when I am gone."

And then both were silent; but their haunts met, and did not part again. Cut off from the living world by fast-approaching death, they felt the need of clinging to something in that grim isolation of the grave. Parted in life, they were drawn together as life ebbed away.

All at once Laura uttered a wild cry—the cry of a sudden revulsion of hope, following up their despair.

"A boat! a boat! We may be saved yet!"

"Thank God!" ejaculated Melincourt, fervently, as the flitting sail caught his eye.

Instantly his powerful voice was uplifted in a shout that made the air ring. Twice the sail seemed unheeded, and their hearts died within them; but the third time came a faint answering shout, and the boat, veering suddenly, made straight for the spot where they stood. Then Laura's firmness gave way at last, and she sank helplessly upon her companion's sustaining arm.

Half an hour later, they were safe in the boat; and the sturdy old Breton fisherman, having made the lady comfortable in the stern-sheets, with a spare sail by way of a cushion, went forward to the bow (blessings on him for a considerate old fellow!) and busied himself with the management of the boat.

"Miss Maynard," said Ashley, solemnly, "after what we have passed through to-day, there can be no reserve between us. I owe it to you to explain my rudeness the other day, by showing you that my hatred of critics and criticism is not without cause. Two years ago, a dear friend of mine died very suddenly, and left his widow almost starving; and, unhappily, I was quite unable to help her, except by writing a book which might, I hoped, yield money enough to keep her from absolute want. I had to write it in a desperate hurry, of course, as my kind critics were good enough to remark; but still, I think I might have saved the poor woman if I one of those 'slashing articles' in the *New York Empire* had not ruined all!"

"The *New York Empire*!" echoed Laura, in a voice so unlike her own that it made him start. "What was your book called?"

"Withered Leaves."

Laura uttered a stifled cry, and, bursting into tears, seized his hand in both her own.

"Oh, Mr. Melincourt, can you forgive me? That horrible review—I wrote it!"

Melincourt looked at her in silent amazement.

"I wrote it," she repeated, with a woman's impetuous eagerness to atone for any injustice; "but oh, I never dreamed—how could I?—what harm I was doing—how could I?—And to think how I enjoyed writing it, and read bits of it to my friends, while all the while—Can you ever forgive me?"

"My wife and I never had but one quarrel," said Ashley Melincourt, some years later; "and that, luckily, was before our marriage, over a book of mine that she cut up. She'll hardly cut up any more of them now, though, for I make her the heroine of every one I write!"—*Frank Leslie's Monthly*.

## Horse Prices in England.

According to a London journal agricultural horses are fetching very high prices in the west of England, from \$250 to \$2000 being a common figure for anything like serviceable animals. A rare lot of horses belonging to farmers quitting their holdings in Dorset, were sold at Doncaster lately and brought from \$225 to \$255, being principally purchased by dealers from London, Liverpool, Bristol, and other centres. The run for second-rate animals was from \$150 to \$190.

## AGRICULTURAL.

## TOPICS OF INTEREST RELATIVE TO FARM AND GARDEN.

## MAKE BENS DO YOUR FERTILIZING.

A small flock of hens can be made very useful if they are confined and allowed to scratch over a pile of manure which is placed under a cover. They will make the manure very fine, and thoroughly mix it with whatever substance you may desire to put with it, and besides will find a large part of their own subsistence in the bugs and worms. Give them a small pile at first, and add to it gradually, after each day's work. They do not mind confinement as long as they are employed and find pay.—*Farm, Field and Stockman*.

## CURING HORSES OF TONGUE LOLLING.

There are several forms of bits in use for curing horses of the habit of lolling or thrusting out the tongue when at work or driven on the road. But in all the forms the idea is to prevent the horse from thrusting his tongue over the bit and out of the mouth. Sometimes the bit is bent up in the middle or has a plate attached to rest on the tongue. You can make an excellent bit by using a leather bar with rings attached to each end. In the back of the leather bar fasten two small screw eyes about two inches or a little more apart. Then take a piece of round ten wire seven inches long, and bend it with two right angles and an eye turned at each end and inserted in the screw eyes in the leather bar. This wire should lie loosely on the tongue, but it will prevent it from being passed over the bar and out of the mouth.—*New York Sun*.

## BUCKWHEAT.

The value of buckwheat as a farm crop is not fully appreciated by all farmers. When thousands of acres of virgin land was being cleared by our forefathers, buckwheat was always the first crop to be planted. It was the only crop that would catch well on such land and loosen the soil properly for better crops. Buckwheat contains less of the albuminoids than wheat, but a greater amount of starch and fat. It is, therefore, very fattening, and makes an excellent feed for pigs and poultry. It will grow best where there is a light soil, and it will flourish under a greater rainfall than other grains.

As a second crop buckwheat cannot be surpassed. Crops that have been destroyed by drought, insects or other causes can be succeeded by buckwheat with good results. New land is benefited by it in several ways. It loosens the soil and exterminates the weeds. It is such a rapid grower that it will outgrow the weeds and kill them. On new land it acts well as a green fertilizer. If not cut, but allowed to die on the field, the straw makes a valuable vegetable manure, which every soil, new or old, requires more or less.—*Washington Star*.

## PASTURAGE.

It is important that this be properly chosen, especially for growing colts. If this is on very rich land, or watery, the grass will be too rank for the growth of fine, strong bones, and firm, enduring muscle. Colts grown up on such will be pretty sure to be wanting in spirit, slow of movement and deficient in wind, so much so that when in harness it, put up to a moderately fast pace—which can only be done by a repeated application of the whip—they breathe painfully, sweat intolerably and soon tire. The best pasture ground for colts is such as is well drained, or naturally rather dry, and if it abounds with scattered rocks a foot or more in diameter, these are not objectionable, but small stones are, for the colts in running about are liable to strike on them to the injury of their hoofs, while they avoid the larger ones and rocks in their exercise. The grass on such lands is sweet and tender, highly relished by the colts, and very nutritious. Growing up on such, especially if limited to it, the feet and legs and the bones of the whole body become extra strong, more like ivory than common bone grown on quite succulent pasture. For colts the pasture need not be so select in quality, for they will do well on wet meadows when the water is generally a little below the surface of the soil, only occasionally overflowing for a few hours and then drying off well.—*American Agriculturist*.

## THE FLOWER GARDEN IN SUMMER.

To have flowering plants and shrubs flourish during the warm season, writes Helen Warburton in the *Washington Star*, one must needs take good care of them, and not trust too much to nature. The fault with many is to think that in the summer time everything will bloom and look its best no matter how little attention is bestowed upon it. But the garden of the experienced flower-lover will always look much neater, prettier and fresher than the one presided over by an ignorant amateur. To say that weeds should be kept out of the garden is an unnecessary precaution, for all understand the need of such work. But there are other little odd jobs that can be done about the flower garden with satisfactory results. If the blooming season is to be prolonged all flowers should be removed as soon as they begin to fade. The strength of the plant that would go to produce seed will then contribute toward making new flowers. The embryo seed-vessels should be pinched off, and the plant will make another effort to bud out in all such places. To secure flowers all attempts of the plants to produce seeds should be stopped.

Bedding plants should be cut back frequently, as this induces new growths, and new growths usually produce new flowers. The flowering season can also be prolonged very greatly by taking care to stir the top soil occasionally with a small trowel. This allows the air to circulate around the roots of the plants and makes small passage ways for the water to trickle through. If plenty of water is then supplied the plants there is no reason why flowers should not be blooming in the garden until late autumn. I have had annuals flowering until the first frost of the year nipped them.

Some plants, such as dahlies, tuberoses and the tall varieties of the gladiolus, are easily broken, and they need some support other than their frail stems. Stakes should be placed alongside of them, and the stalks securely fastened in an upright position. If the stakes are cut from the woods when green they can hardly be distinguished from the plants. The plants should be tied to them with wide strips of cloth, and not with string, as the latter is liable to cut the plants. If a dry season makes the plants wilt in spite of frequent watering, it is well to

make a mulch around the plants. This can be done by cutting green grass from the lawn and spreading it close up around the base of the plants. When it rots it can be dug into the soil, where it will act as a good fertilizer.

## THRESHING DAY.

An me, how many threshing days do you remember—some sad ones and some pleasant ones. Sometimes the crop proves almost a failure, and sometimes it turns out better than we expected, and the good, wife rejoiced and gave the threshers and all hands the best the house could furnish. In my younger days we were threshing more or less all winter. Now a ten-horse power steam thrasher does the whole work sometimes in one long day and always in two days. It is a trying year for the farmer, and if he is not careful he will be likely to overtake himself. If he is wise nothing but absolute necessity should induce him to "cut hands," or take away the grain, or build the stack, or undertake any work that will confine him to one spot. He can always find plenty to do. Sometimes the men who are pitching the grain to the machine may come across a lot of rakings, and a little help may encourage them. Sometimes the man who is carrying away the grain will find the granary choked up, and the farmer, by the vigorous use of a scapshovel, will make all right again in a few minutes. Sometimes the wind may bother the men on the stack, and a few words of encouragement and sympathy, with a little assistance, will put new spirit into them.

The essential points to look after are: 1st. The granary. It may need a few strips of tin to make it rat and mouse proof. Remember, also, that you have not only to get the grain into it, but also to get it out again—and it sometimes happens that it is necessary to get it out sooner than you expect. Should it get warm it will be necessary immediately to turn it out or spread it out on the barn floor, or run it through a fanning mill. 2d. See that the machine thrashes clean. If not, lower the concave. See that no grain is carried over with the chaff. Occasionally the threshers have a visitor who wants to feed the machine, and he carries in the sheaves, and the sheaves cannot properly clean the grain, and more or less of passes over on to the straw carrier. 3d. Look to the straw stack. This is an important matter to those of us who feed the straw. The great secret of making a stack rain-proof is to keep the middle full, and well trodden down from the start, so that when it settles, the outside will sink down lower than the inside. When you begin to build the roof, the part that needs the most care is immediately under the straw carrier. The chaff is apt to accumulate there, and when the machine is removed there will be a depression in the stack at this point that will let in the rain. Take special pains to put some layers of long straw under the straw carrier. Many of our straw carriers are not long enough, and if it is necessary for a man to throw the straw up on the roof of the stack, drive some long poles into the stack and place an old door on them for the man to stand on. If this is not done, the place where he stands will be a hole difficult to fill up so that it will shed the water. The farmer, if he is wise, will frequently be on the straw stack during the day and help to tread it down in the middle, but for his own safety and for the good of the stack he will not venture too near the outside.

4th. Look out for fire from the engine, but in point of fact there is more danger from tobacco smokers than from the engine.—*American Agriculturist*.

## FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

Forethought is one good harvest hand. The best incubator in the world is the hen.

It is highly extravagant to use low-priced mow oil.

As a rule black bees are not more hardy than Italians.

Grow the pigs from the day of birth to the day of slaughter.

Twelve hours with system harvests more than sixteen hours without.

A well-known agriculturist claims that Canada thistle can be eradicated by smothering with clover.

An experienced poultry raiser of Georgia is confident that at the South poultry cannot be made a success without a good shaded run for the fowls during the hot months.

Rye which has been sown for pasture must be kept fed down closely. If it be allowed to grow too much it will become tough and woolly; if fed closely it will accept, and if the ground be rich the food will be abundant.

A correspondent of the *Southern Cultivator* emphasizes the hardness of Langshan fowls saying that they stand the cold winters of the North and the hot summers of the South better than any breed he is acquainted with.

Poultry droppings make the best of manure for the garden. If you have not already built a light bin for their preservation, you should do so this winter. Their droppings will buy one-third of what they will eat in twelve months.

How to make a good warm breakfast for forty fowls: Boil a heaping half peck of potatoes, mash them; add one quart each of shorts and bran, a tablespoonful each of salt and pepper; add hot water enough to mix into a stiff dough.

That the farmer may establish a quick-growing, beefy kind upon his farm, he is only required to secure growthy specimens—good feeders—of breeds not akin, and he will straightway obtain what he desires. It is largely the throwing in of new blood that tells upon a herd, a wise selection never failing to make a betterment.

The testimony accumulates that it is better to feed milk cows but twice per day, as it is alleged that well fed cows can put in their time resting and ruminating their food more profitably than to spend it in any other way. The man who thinks a cow ought to be entering all over a half bar pasture to get a livelihood doubtless does not believe in the above.

The introduction of the Pekin duck, together with rapid strides in artificial hatching, has made duck raising a profitable industry. Ducks are very hardy, entirely free from vermin, and liable to few diseases. They take to confinement much better than fowls, and a cheap (very low) fence is sufficient to keep them in the desired place. They stand transportation better, either alive or dressed, than most kind of fowls. They are great egg producers, and their feathers are of considerable value.

## POPULAR SCIENCE.

Electric lighting on man-of-war ship is so great a success that it is now considered no such ship is complete without it.

The first submarine cable manufactory was started in Italy two years ago; now it has an output of 10,000 metres per day.

The critical temperature of recalcence defines the stages at which hot steel when suddenly cooled becomes either hard or is annealed.

An increase in phosphorus in iron has been found to decrease its conductivity, and the same peculiarity has been noticed with manganese.

The infant mortality ranges from twenty-one to fifty per cent. In other words, out of every eight children born from two to four will die, before the age of five.

The shortest time occupied by the tornado cloud in passing a given point varies from "an instant" to about twenty minutes, the average being seventy-four seconds.

During the last ten years an oculist of Cromwell is said to have treated thirty cases of photo-electric ophthalmia, a new disease due to the action of the electric light on the eyes.

Two traveling platforms of ten tons capacity moved by electricity and mounted on girders are used to carry visitors around the machinery hall of the Paris Exposition.

The boring for oil in the United States is not always successful—for instance, a boring at Southbury, Conn., has lately been abandoned after 200 feet had been explored and \$10,000 lost in the undertaking.

An English club man wagered \$25 that he could stand for thirty minutes without moving a muscle outside of those required for respiration. At the end of twenty-two minutes he fell over in a fit.

A fragment of a meteor which recently fell in Chicago, was analyzed and found to contain 73 per cent. of iron, 21 of nickel, 2 of manganese and small quantities of aluminium, cobalt, tin, copper, arsenic, etc.

Coal dust triturated into dust as fine as flour has just been tested as a fuel for iron-making at the Morehead Mill, Sharpshoot, and found to accomplish as much in one hour as the gas furnace does in an hour and a quarter. Going mine refuse it costs nothing.

Dr. Dulach, of Liverpool, has come to the conclusion that consumption can be transmitted from cows to human beings through milk. His experiments prove that guinea-pigs, rabbits and monkeys, fed on the milk of tuberculous cows develop tubercular disease.

An official report gives the number of British boiler explosions for the year ending with last June as sixty-one, with a loss of thirty-one lives. More than half of the explosions were due to the use of worn out boilers, seventeen to defective designs and fittings or undue working pressure, seven to ignorance or neglect of attendants, and six to miscellaneous causes.

Mushrooms are but tender, food-stocked growth where the soil is very much of vegetable substance. All such objects are but the cells of plants in the soil given a discharge from the ground by a force of electricity which the earth discharges wherever plants or corals are grown. A form is given the object by a part of the substance being spilled over the top of a stalk and contracted by the dryer condition of the atmosphere. The remains in the top are but a consequence of the shrinking of the substance.

## Business Blocked by Bees.

A swarm of bees took possession of Main street in Meriden, Conn., a few days ago and blocked traffic on that busy city's busiest thoroughfare for over an hour. A few venturesome drivers sent their horses through the buzzing mass, but those that made the trip paid the penalty of the folly of their owners.

People in the neighborhood were compelled to shut down their windows, for the day was hot and the bees were angry. The bees hanged themselves against the windows in attempts to get inside. Staid business men threw handkerchiefs over their heads and ran skipping away like school boys. The bees were a swarm just let loose, and although at one time they occupied a space as large as a loaf of hay, they finally became compressed into a half bushel and fit on one of the low branches of an evergreen tree in the Baptist church lot. At sundown the church janitor spread a white cloth on the ground under them and placed a large keg at an angle on the cloth. The lower head of the clock had been knocked out, and the inside of the keg was smeared with molasses. Then the limb was sawed off and the bees dumped on the cloth. The queen bee made for the keg, and in an hour a royal swarm was hatched.—*Chicago Journal*.

## Where Haircloth Comes From.

"Yes," said a furniture man on the Bowery a few days ago, "the manufacture of haircloth has fallen off considerably, chiefly because it is not used to such a great extent as it used to be. Furniture covered with haircloth used to be very popular, but other materials have superseded it. And speaking of haircloth, many people are ignorant of where the hair comes from that was used in the manufacture. The first piece of haircloth that was made in this country was made in Rahway, N. J., in 1813. Two New York men were the patentees, and it was called Taurine cloth. It was made from the hair of cattle, with a mixture of wool. The sources of supply for horse hair were Siberia, which probably furnished sixty per cent. of the amount used, and South America, which furnished about twenty-five per cent. The rest was collected in other countries. What is collected in Tartary, Siberia and other Russian possessions is brought to Tobolsk, where there is an annual fair, in which the sale of this hair is one of the principal articles of merchandise."—*New York World*.

## Self-Depreciation Good Form in China.

Etiquette requires in Chinese conversation that each should compliment the other and depreciate himself and all his belongings. It is affirmed that the following is not an exaggeration: "What is your honorable name?" "My insignificant appellation is Chang." "Where is your magnificent palace?" "My contemptible hut is at Luchan." "How many are your illustrious children?" "My vile, worthless brats are five." "How the health of your distinguished spouse?" "My mean, good-for-nothing old wife is well."—*New York Graphic*.

## CURIOUS FACTS.

The English language has 200,000 words.

In India a medical student's hair turned white during an examination.

Wood can be sawed in veneers only one two-hundredths of an inch thick.

The weight of the heart is from eight to twelve ounces. It beats 100,000 times a day.

If all the telephone wires in this country were stretched in a continuous line they would go seven times around the globe.

The latest fad in photography is the portrait stamp. It is the size of a postage stamp, and is gummed ready to apply to letters.

In Berlin heavy wagons are not allowed on certain streets. In Paris any cartload of rattling material must be fastened till it can't rattle.

The record for hard-boiled egg-eating is held by a young man named Canary, who once disposed of forty-two eggs in forty-five minutes.

What an Ohio farmer plowed up and took to be the bones of an ancient tree in height turned out to be the skeletons of two five-foot men.

The sweetest thing King Solomon knew of was honey, but in these days that delicacy is positively sour compared to three or four different compounds.

The French factory of Matis is the only one in the world where glass large and perfect enough for the lenses of a big telescope can be successfully cast.

Alfred S. Kilder, of Portland, Oregon, inherited \$50,000 four years ago. He lost it at poker, and when his last \$500 went that way recently in Richmond, Va., he blew out his brains.

Belgium is a poor place for physicians. A writer to a medical journal published there says that they have the care of three-fourths of the population, get nothing at all from one-half of their patients and very poor pay from the rest.

In 1687 the sea retired from the shores of Peru, and returned in mountainous waves, which destroyed everything on the coast. In 1728 the same phenomenon took place, and only 200 out of 4000 inhabitants of Callao saved themselves.

There were found recently in the heart of a big red oak, cut down near Hickman, Tenn., the "three drops," where, with the original survivors of the country, blazed it, and over which were the rings indicating seventy-five years of growth.

The latest crank prominently reported is the madstone crank. In New York city who suddenly offers to allow himself to be bitten by a mad dog for not in consideration of the sum of \$500, relying on his precious madstone to effect a cure.

Under what is known as the Union of Sabar, Denmark, Sweden and Norway were united in June, 1396, under Margaret, Queen of Norway and Sweden, the Scandinavians of the North. The union continued until dissolved by Gustav Vasa in 1523.

For several years there was a standing offer of \$10 for a partridge's nest containing more than twelve eggs, the records at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington giving that as the greatest number of eggs of that species to a nest. A party of Worcester (Mass.) girls recently won the money by finding a nest with fifteen eggs.

The reason why fishes and mollusks live more than three miles under water is able to bear a pressure of several tons a that they have exceedingly loose scales, which allow the water to flow freely through every interstice, and thus equalize the weight. When the pressure is removed they perish.

## Great Waste Spots.

The Sahara Desert, according to Mr. Joseph P. James, is a diversified area 3100 miles long by 600 wide. Summer is its only season, its days scorching, its nights cold. Its soil is chiefly gravel and coarse sand. Its oases enable caravans to cross it, although much of the area is otherwise waterless and destitute of all vegetation and animal life.

The Desert of Gobi, in the Asiatic Sahara, is more than 1800 miles long and 500 wide. It is a plateau 5000 feet high, a waste of sand and rock, with few oases, and only five trees in a distance of 500 miles. Ice forms nearly every night, and the temperature often falls to thirty or forty degrees below zero. The interior of Australia rivals these two great deserts and is the most terrible of all to travelers on account of its heat and the lack of water. It contains about a half million square miles, and the northern part is almost entirely destitute of vegetation.

The Arabian Desert is a sandy waste of about 50,000 square miles, dotted here and there with a few stunted bushes or low palm trees. A characteristic of this and other Asiatic deserts is the suffocating simoon. A large part of Persia is a desert tract, in which vegetation is so rare that one may travel 300 miles and see only one tree. Here the Salt Desert, with a porous crustal surface, often extends 100 miles in length by half as much in width. In South America the Puna extends for 350 Spanish miles in length at an elevation of 12,000 feet. A brown grass covers the ground, there are but few trees, and a single tuberous plant can be cultivated. Animal life is comparatively abundant. Another desert of Peru—now partially subdued by man and crossed by a railroad—stretches 1200 miles along the Pacific, from eight to fifty miles wide.

The Great American Desert of the United States is a basin region of many hundreds of square miles of rock, sand and alkali, with a scanty growth of sage brush and a little animal life.

## A Quivering Tree.

In front of Macedonia Church, in Columbia County, Ga., is a quivering tree. Years ago, the negroes of the neighborhood say, a murder was done under its branches. Two men had accompanied a woman to church, and after she had entered the edifice they quarreled about her, and one cut the other to death. The murderer escaped, and ever since every limb, large and small, on the tree trembles as if in fear, or as if suffering from a violent quiver. This occurs when not a breath of air is stirring. No negro in Columbia County can be induced to pass the so-called haunted spot alone at night. Prominent gentlemen say they have noticed the phenomenon, but no explanation of it has ever been volunteered.—*Chicago Herald*.

All grain in California is put up in sacks, holding from 100 to 120 pounds, and which cost from seven to eight cents each.

## SUNSHINE LAND.

They came in sight of a lovely shore,  
Yellow as gold in the morning light;  
The sun's own color at noon it wore,  
And it faded not at the fall of night;  
Clear weather or cloudy, 'twas all as one,  
The happy hills seemed bathed with the sun;  
His secret the sailors could not understand,  
But they called this country Sunshine Land.

What was the secret? A simple thing,  
I will make you smile when once you know  
Touched by the tender finger of spring,  
A million blossoms were all about;  
So many, so many, so many and bright,  
They covered the hills with a mantle of light;  
And the wild bee hummed and the glad breeze  
Fanned.

Through the honeyed fields of Sunshine Land,  
Over the sea we two were bound,  
What port, dear child, would we choose for our course?

We would sail, and sail till at last we found  
This fairy land of million flowers.  
Yet, darling, we'd find, if at home we stayed,  
Of many small joy our pleasures are made,  
More near than we think, very close at hand,  
Lie the golden fields of Sunshine Land.

—Edith M. Thomas.